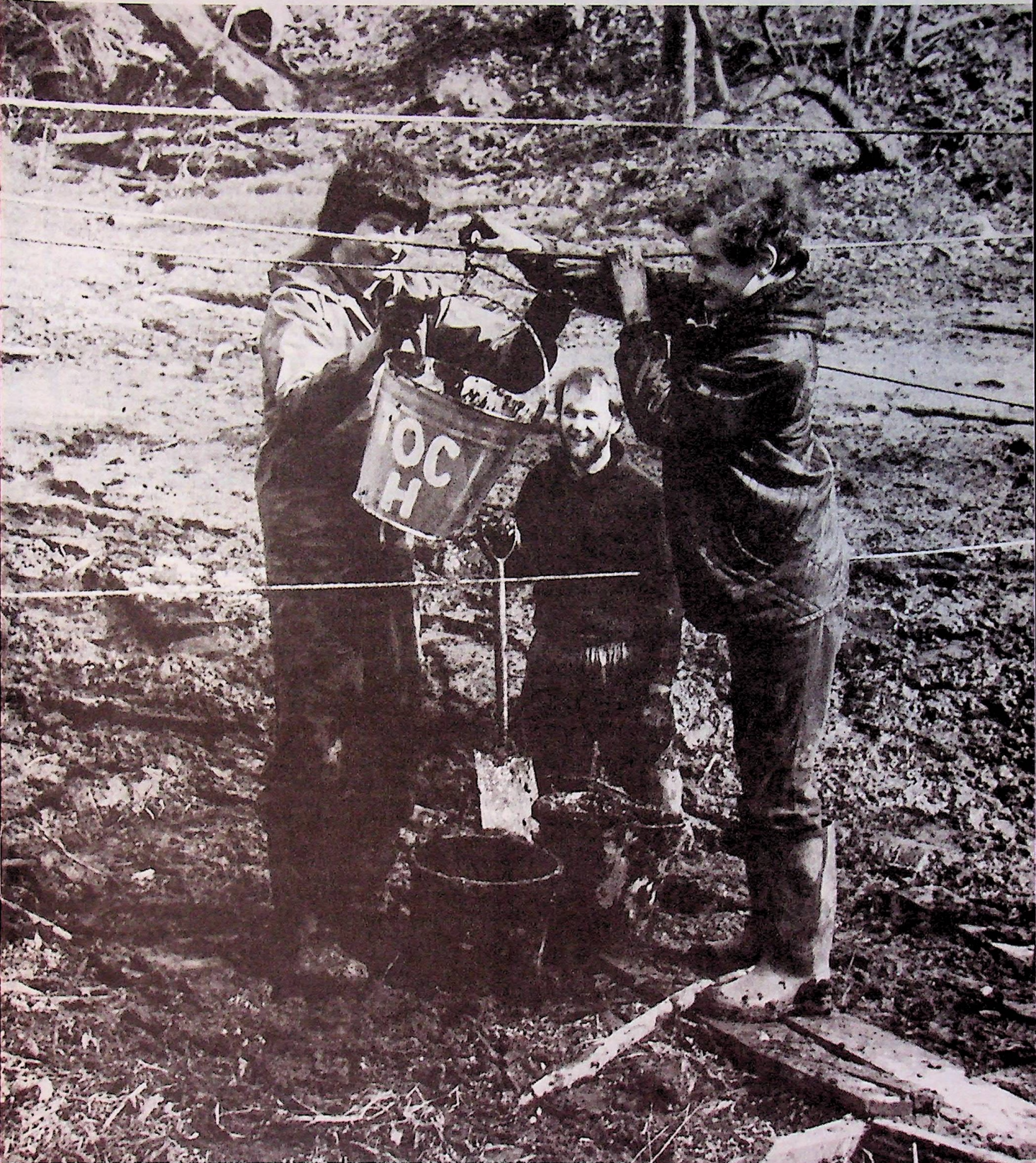


Point Three



The Toc H magazine
August 1983 10p



MUD!

(pages 8-9)

Point Three

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Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

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Toc H seeks to create friendship and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Local group activities range from holidays for the handicapped and children's playschemes to arts festivals and even bird watching. Toc H is short for Talbot House – the soldiers' club in Belgium founded by the Reverend 'Tubby' Clayton in 1915. Today Toc H provides opportunities for people to test the relevance of practical Christianity and we welcome anyone who would like to give us a try.

Members accept a four fold commitment:

1. To build friendships across the barriers that divide man from man.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while always being willing to listen to the views of others.
4. To work for the Kingdom of God.

This magazine, which acts as a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world in which we live, takes its title from the third of these Four Points – to think fairly.

Cover picture

Moving the sludge buckets at Leckhampton – see pp8-9.

Photo: David Christie

Personal View

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

I see that Parliament is to have another debate on capital punishment. All the arguments have been so well rehearsed since the hanging of murderers first ceased for a trial period 20 years ago, that I have no intention of repeating them. Most of them, anyway, are utilitarian arguments which skirt the main issue. The real debate is a moral one and moves out from murder to all crime and the whole philosophy of punishment.

There are two concepts of punishment. One sees it as a tool to achieve other ends, eg the reform of the criminal or stopping him from further criminal acts. This view – very commonly held – looks ahead to bringing about some change beneficial to the criminal or to the rest of us. Because it looks into the future it produces all the conflicting arguments we know so well. The second concept is that community imposed punishment looks back to the criminal act and is shaped to express the measure of the community's disapproval of the deed itself.

Which approach we take depends largely on our preconceptions (prejudices!); in most matters that affect us deeply we tend to hold a fixed position and then look for arguments to back it up. C S Lewis was fond of pointing this out. ('... *If the end of the world appeared in all the literal trappings of the Apocalypse, if the modern materialist saw with his own eyes the heavens rolled up and the great white throne appearing, if he had the sensation of being himself hurled into the Lake of Fire, he would continue forever... to regard his experience as an illusion...*') And when we start with the conclusion and then think of the arguments, we tend to be inconsistent. Do you remember the rabies scare a few years ago? I heard men who believed that all crime was the result of deprivation clamouring for deterrent punishments for all those caught smuggling animals into the country! With the approval of most liberal thinkers, we still catch, try and sentence old Nazi war criminals. They may be reformed men and, in any case, they can do no further harm. Few of us – however compassionate – would claim that Hitler would have been a good man if his mother had cuddled him more or that Heydrich would have been transformed if we had tried a bit harder to understand him. No, somehow, despite what we believe to be our convictions, we feel that society must go on showing its total abhorrence for what these men once did. We are not always logical or consistent in matters that concern us deeply.

But let us try for a while. Many of our received ideas about crime and punishment stem from the social and psychological thinking of the last 100 years or so: and much of that is based on the idea that we are creatures of our environment. Hitherto, every organised society of which I know anything started from the different assumption that criminal acts, like other acts, were generally the product of a man's deliberate choice. Traditionally, therefore, anti-social acts have attracted punishments. These punishments have never been confused with revenge because they have been seen as both impersonal and impartial. The short term aim of the particular punishment might have been to induce shame (eg the stocks) or inflict shock (flogging) but the ultimate objective was to show the community's revulsion from certain anti-social acts. Reforms of the criminal (when possible) and the improvement of the social environment are very important, but in this tradition they have never been seen as the purpose of punishing crime.

If that tradition is wrong, there seems little point in punishing criminals at all. We once thought that crime would diminish as poverty declined. It is true that, in every age, most crime is committed by the relatively disadvantaged but we know now that rising general affluence has been accompanied by steadily rising serious crime. The latest study I have seen accepts that some violent and sexual crimes are associated with mental abnormality. But it shows plainly that the great majority of serious criminal acts are committed by people who have nothing in common but their criminality and that hardly any of these need or respond to psychiatric treatment. Further, corporal and capital punishment seem to have no significant effect on the number of crimes of violence.

To return to where we started, I find myself in a dilemma about capital punishment for murder. On the whole I take what I have called the traditional view about the purpose of punishment: that is my particular preconception. Then, I agree with most people in most societies that premeditated murder or murder in pursuit of crime is uniquely abhorrent. It follows logically that society should express that abhorrence with a punishment never inflicted for lesser crimes. But '*life is larger than logic*'. Many of those I know who are urging the return of the ultimate penalty seem to me – and, of course, I may be misjudging them – to be actuated by feelings and motives that I find equally abhorrent! That is the moral dilemma for me.

What do you think?

Angus Ogilvy



All of us, I'm sure, are saddened by Angus Ogilvy's decision to resign as our Vice-Patron. He has done so because the pressure of his many other activities makes it impossible for him to give us the time he would wish, and feels as Vice-Patron he ought, to give. Obviously we respect that decision.

Angus played a major part in arranging the sale of 15 Trinity Square and the move of Headquarters to Wendover. He was a familiar and welcome figure at Toc H Festivals and other major events. We are grateful for these 'official' contributions but we are even more grateful for the informal friendship which many of us have enjoyed and appreciated. I remember at the opening of the Youth Club in Hackney, for instance, how much he relished, once the formalities were over, the opportunity for informal banter with the club members.

In saying thank you we are not saying goodbye. We know that, although he has resigned from his official position, his friendship for Toc H will continue and we hope that there will be times when we can welcome him to Toc H events as an 'ordinary' member.

KP-B

Welcome

The following Branches elected new members during May/June.

- 3 — Accrington (J), Crewkerne (J), Higham Ferrers (W)
- 2 — Biggleswade (M), Clacton-on-Sea (M), Cleveland District, Corwen (M), Newcastle West (J)
- 1 — Barkingside (M), Colwyn Bay (M), Dolgellau (M), Falmouth (J), Kennington (London) (J), Newport (IOW) (W), Owton Manor (W), Parkhurst (W), Pickering (J), St Annes (J), Salcombe (J), Walsall (M), Worthing (M).

A warm welcome to 32 new members

What's happening in Bridlington?

by David Clark

All their own work!

Bridlington Toc H Action Group are an independent lot. They took 19 underprivileged children on an action packed holiday and they raised (or cadged) the £1,000 expenses as well!

Money raising was spread over the previous year — carol singing, raffles, sponsored events, a jumble sale and other typical Toc H ploys for winking money out of people! That accounted for about £300. The balance of £700 came from other charities and trusts (including £200 passed on from the Headquarters share of the Queen's Jubilee Trust Fund).

I'll be mother . . .

The children, chosen by the local social services, were divided into 'families' of four, with a Toc H 'mum and dad' in charge. Everyone got to know one another that way; it also made it easier to

find out who was missing and quicker to organise jobs like washing up. The two drivers also proved invaluable in the role of extra 'dads'.

Rule one for a project: keep the kids amused or they'll tear one another apart and then start on you! Bridlington TAG certainly succeeded, turning them loose on an adventure playground, a gymnasium, steam railway, airport, canal museum and a zoo, where they saw the chimpanzees used in the famous TV advert. What the chimps thought of them is not recorded.

Round the corkscrew

The secret seemed to be keep them fed and make them tired! Food cost about £300, plus donations 'in kind' from volunteers' families and wasn't wasted — even the girl who went for 15 rides on the 'corkscrew' didn't lose her lunch!



The ten volunteers stood the strain very well. One of them went through the project with a leg in plaster, but she had that before the project started, so that doesn't count. Only one volunteer had to go to hospital with slight injuries, and nobody died, though they probably felt like it at times!

What, again?

'Never again' was my verdict when I went on a project involving children and I've stuck to my resolution — but Bridlington TAG have arranged a reunion for volunteers, children and their parents. This is the time when slides and photographs are shown, experiences recalled and rash suggestions made, like 'Let's do it again!'

In fact, they are going to do it again. By the time you read this, they'll be packing the first aid kits and signing their wills before collecting ten children from Toxteth, Liverpool for a week's holiday in Bridlington. Some people never learn!



Round and about with Scott Shaw

Transport of delight

What's this — a minibus full of women! Not only that — it's owned and operated by Belfairs, a women's Branch!

Although their involvement stops short at getting up to their elbows in oily innards, they certainly use it just as well as any Branch of mere men!

During fine weather, on Sundays and Tuesdays, they take local elderly people on outings and provide refreshments, either at a member's home or in a cafe. They also treat them to an annual tea party.

But the Branch don't keep it to themselves — the bus is also loaned out to other charities like Gingerbread, the Red Cross, a mental health group and those poor men of Southend Branch who don't have a minibus of their own!

All charities pay for petrol and usually give a small donation but, say our correspondent Madge Grellier, the Branch raises the rest of the running costs with coffee mornings, garden parties and bring and buy sales. So in a way, you could say the bus runs on coffee, cake and jam!

Never say die!

Okehampton Women's Branch decided to close a year ago when their chairman died and the secretary fell seriously ill, but they were encouraged to hold on, and now they're doing fine!

Although members are all over 70, they visit a local hospital every fortnight, assisted by seven 'friends of Toc H' who help with transport and a minister who conducts services for the patients.

They also did a good job as hosts to the District AGM — *'proof of what "disowning discouragement", faith and perseverance can do with God's help'*, says our correspondent.

The last bite

An incomplete press cutting from the Kidderminster Times sent a chill up my spine. Headed 'Toc H, Wyre Forest' it reads *'Since the early days of its inception in 1921, Toc H has been involved in the Blood...'*

If that's the case, Wyre Forest is one place I'll steer clear of!

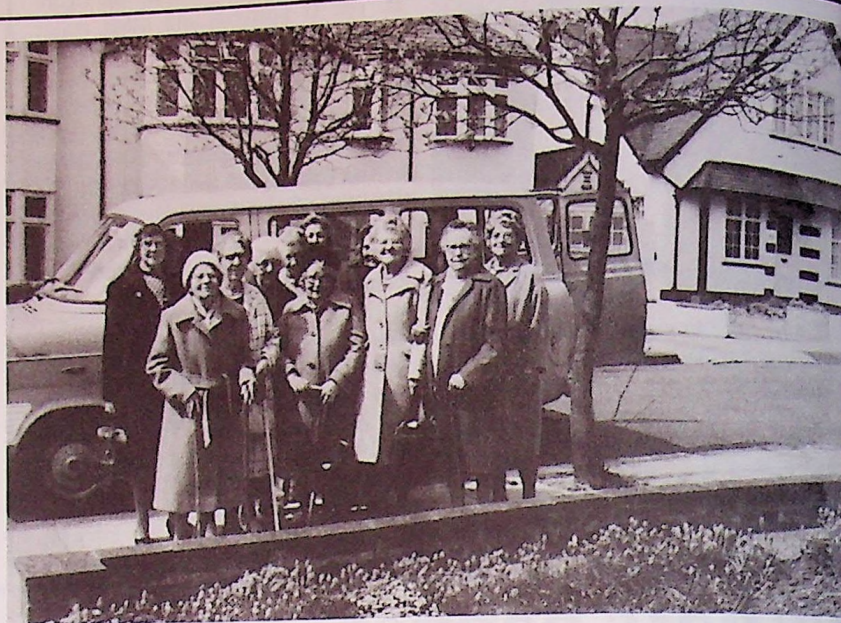


Photo: Hilma Walters

This'll interest you, Bill . . .

It's the little thoughtful acts that made Toc H what it is. Middlesbrough Branch know Bill, a war pensioner, is interested in the sea, so when they heard of an illustrated lecture on salvaging the Mary Rose, they arranged to take him along.

Bill, *'an enthusiastic lad of 87'* according to Norman Carey, Middlesbrough's treasurer, really enjoyed his outing and rounded off the evening by showing some of his models.

Getting down to it, up North

A 'secret something' set the high tone of the day when the North Wales and North West Region held their annual festival of thanksgiving and dedication. They also celebrated Stockport's 60th birthday.

The special ingredient to the day, (reports Bill Bennett) was added by the Stockport Padre David Wilkinson and Basil Jones, Regional Padre. After tea came a talk by Toc H's longest serving staff member, George Lee, concluding with a concert by the Hazel Grove male voice choir.

The following weekend, Stockport Branch and friends continued their celebrations at Alison House in the beautiful Peak District. Again George Lee was the guest speaker and his audience debated the question *'Has Toc H a future?'*

Their conclusion was yes — provided we hold on to our Christian principles and

are willing to change our approach where necessary. Listeners felt we should also be willing to work with and listen to the views of young people, especially those with experience of a variety of projects.

(I couldn't agree more — we're never too old to learn, and the young often have experiences and opportunities which we've missed. We shouldn't hesitate to gain from their knowledge).

The weekend ended with a 'typical Toc H social, with much laughter and good fellowship'. To this was added a surprise when Robin and Mary Fryer produced a huge 60th birthday cake. Bill felt the weekend was *'a wonderful birthday celebration, the way we feel like should be lived, in love and joy and peace'*.

Where there is despair . . .

Toc H members helped to entertain two dozen pensioners from strife-torn Belfast on a fortnight's visit to Peterborough in April, (reports District PRO George Dixon).

Both Roman Catholics and Protestants received hospitality from a similarly mixed group of denominations. Toc H members served coffee in the Minster precincts before the party was shown round the Cathedral.

The holiday was organised by Peterborough Council of Churches, following an idea given to Peterborough Deanery Synod by Toc H Honorary Padre, Brian Blade.

A sign of the times in Bideford

Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. Once upon a time, Toc H was the most famous voluntary organisation in existence — as they say in the North, cock of the midden. It was the thing to belong to. In real life, the Prince of Wales was a member. In fiction, Bulldog Drummond (a sort of steam-age James Bond) was in it too.

Then things began to change. Toc H, once a tall tree in an empty field, became surrounded by younger trees, growing just as fast, if not faster — but no-one noticed. By the early 50s, there were other voluntary bodies competing for members and Toc H, once in a monopoly position, now has to shout for its share of attention.

Bideford is an example of how the world wags nowadays. At the town's 'caring community' exhibition in 1981, no less than 36 voluntary organisations attended — an unheard of figure 20 years ago.

Fortunately Bideford Joint and Women's Branches are wide awake and living in the present — they have combined meetings each month and can count on 44 people actively helping Toc H in the town.

It works two ways — Toc H members have their fingers in other committee 'pies' too. Says Beryl Hammond: *'We are*

few; we are not chickens; we need some of you good members to retire (or come to work) in our glorious north Devon where we would welcome you with open arms'.

I was going to give you a stirring conclusion but Beryl's is better: *'Never give up, however small your numbers. You'll always have something to offer. Give God an inch and he will make a good yard'.*

The Branch they wanted to close . . .

Ten years ago North Devon District decided to close Bideford Men's Branch. No, said Harry Olver, (a then member of the part time staff), there's still some life in it — let me try to keep it going.

Today it's a healthy Joint Branch, concentrating on helping two local units for the handicapped, dealing with both children and adults; patients visit the Branch every month and some have become members. *'Their wholehearted support is a lesson to all'* says Beryl.

There's another lesson too, for the rest of us: never say die! Sometimes all it needs to save a Branch are one or two relevant jobs to replace other work that's become irrelevant or trivial over the years. Too often a Branch just dies of boredom!

Coffee is served - on the bus!

Yes, it's the Plus Bus again! Huddersfield recently held a fund raising weekend for the famous 'black and orange monster'. On the Saturday they parked it in the town centre, served coffee, sold books and let the public look over the vehicle. Naturally, this was a good chance to give out leaflets publicising the bus and Toc H too!

On the Sunday, *'everyone got wet but it was a good laugh'*, says David Brougham, when they did an 'agonising' three-legged walk, ten times round the main park, over eight miles. The weekend earned them well over £100, and some potential members for the youth action groups.

The two Huddersfield youth action Groups also played hosts to local Branches. Brighouse held a cheese and wine party, followed by a slide show, a talk on Toc H youth action Groups and an amusing play by two members. Kirkheaton followed this with a quiz which attracted a large audience — *'people were spilling out of the doors'* says David.

A PS

— to 'Cubs reward a Hunt' in the June issue.

Concerning his move to Clayton House, Crawley, Allan Hunt adds: *'Dru, my wife, was the most important person in making this move a success.'*

'We had lived pretty much on our own for 30 years and to change to a situation where we are now sharing a house with four other people, was a big thing to ask of her.'

'Without her willingness to give it a go, it could not have happened; without her support, we couldn't have entered upon this new lease of life.'

Allan assures us that his links with Surrey will remain and may even be strengthened. For the moment he continues as District Secretary and remains 'very involved' with the Projects Committee.

Footnote

When the July issue closed for press, 70 year old Ron Tyler had completed two sponsored walks. Now he's done another, for the Teignmouth Disabled Fellowship, for which he raised £227. For this he walked from Teignmouth to Exeter and back. Just think, in another 30 years, I could be as fit as him!

It's the jumbo procession

If you're in Belgium at the right time and place, this month, you could see a two and a half mile column of 270 motorcyclists, all carrying disabled children in their sidecars!

The motorcyclists and their young passengers are from Belgium, Britain, the Netherlands, France and Germany and they'll all be on their way to Poperinge in August.

Ivy Swan of Talbot House says these outings have been a frequent event since 1961. It all began in Britain when some motorcyclists took a party of handicapped children to the zoo where the main attraction was Jumbo the elephant.

News of the 'jumbo run' spread and it became international — Holland were the hosts in 1964, Germany in 1967 and Sweden in 1970. Belgium took over in 1971 and Poperinge is the host this year — the 13th occasion.

That was an opportunity too good to miss — and Toc H took it! Valere Deoo, Chairman of the Swans Group was

soon involved with the organisers Mr A Stragier, Willy Lenoir, Andre Temmerman and Robert Schouteet.

So what's going to happen? With a police escort and vans carrying the children's wheelchairs, the motorcyclists and children will set off at 9.30 am on 20 August, following the Hoppeland and Heuvelland Route, arriving at Poperinge in time for lunch after a welcome by the Burgomeester, Marc Lehai.

After lunch, they'll go to the market square to watch displays by the fire brigade, Red Cross, motorcyclists from Ostend and parachutists, who will land in the square.

There's a strong Toc H flavour about all this, because it's not just a 'hello-goodbye' relationship — real friendships have grown up. Motorcyclists take the same child each time, they exchange letters and in some cases even share holidays. And this friendship all started because someone ignored the problems and said *'This is worthwhile — we'll do it!'*

The Wider Family

by Keith Rea —
Toc H International
Secretary

Winant and Clayton Volunteers

At a time when volunteers under this scheme are actually working to help the underprivileged on both sides of the Atlantic, it is hard to have to report that Toc H support of the scheme is coming to a close. However, the decision is a symptom of the changing times and of our own lack of funds.

The Central Executive carefully considered the scheme during two of its meetings and decided that beyond 1983 Toc H could no longer offer support. The reasons, other than finance, are complex, but the following represent some of the most important:

- There are now many larger UK/USA exchange programmes available
- Toc H membership support has been poor
- No Toc H recruitment and follow-up are available in the United States
- High costs paid by volunteers have restricted the mixture within the parties
- With many agencies in England using young people under CSV and Manpower Services Schemes, it has proved difficult to provide worthwhile places in this country at the time they are required for Winant Volunteers
- The real value of donations in support of the scheme has diminished and money raising in support of work in comparatively rich countries has failed.

The concept is still valuable and Toc H will be looking at possibilities of other exchanges, particularly when Toc H support for volunteers is available at both ends of an exchange. At the same time, the Winant Board in the United States is exploring the possibilities of continuing to send volunteers to the UK and we are helping as much as possible.

Zimbabwe

Cefn Coed (South Wales) Branch gave a great send off to one of their stalwart members, Tom Chambers, when he left to visit his family. Reports coming back from Harare indicate that Tom has made his number with the members out there and some would like to arrange a transfer!

Southern Africa

A member of Toc H teaching in the remote rural area of Ntumeri in Zululand, Philip Buthesleza, writes to express thanks to Branches of Toc H in Southern Africa for books and educational films.

'Opportunities for our pupils to watch films, especially educational ones, are very rare. Such opportunities come once a year to our pupils. You could see how happy and curious they were, when the film about the Merchant of Venice was shown that day. Our hall was full to over-

flowing. There were pupils from neighbouring schools who had come to witness this miracle; some of them did not even know what a bioscope was.' Would not the money spent on providing our Breakfast TV be better used to help schools in underdeveloped countries do their vital work?

Good news from Orlando that a site for a creche and youth centre has been allocated to Toc H by Soweto Council.

Australia

Our picture shows Elsey Pay of Bribie Island Branch (Queensland) handing over the keys of a new ambulance, the result of their annual project involving many other organisations. My correspondent, Doreen Barton, writes: *'We have not decided this year on a set project but it is most important that we do as it gives everyone an interest in working together for some particular goal.'*

Reports from Brisbane (Queensland) indicate that Toc H was well to the fore at the 13th Australian Scout Jamboree. The Patron of Toc H Australia, Sir Ninion Stephen, took his turn jumping from the parachute tower and, at the final fly past, the camp area was bombarded with toilet rolls. Young members of St Paul's Branch played a leading role in the whole proceedings.

Following the devastation of fire and flood in S Australia and Victoria, Leila Altschwager writes in the 'Link' — *'There has been a magnificent response from all sections of the Community with money, clothes, furniture and offers of accommodation — in fact the Salvation Army in Adelaide has asked that no more clothes and household things be sent. Members are collecting the smaller items of household necessities which may help to make things more like home when victims move into short term accommodation or rebuilt homes.'*

Chile

Wendover enjoyed a short visit from Joyce Charles, President of Vina del Mar Branch, who gave us welcome news of their activities. Beyond some of the well known prayers, meetings are conducted in Spanish and the Branch is obviously 'of the country' and not dependent on a British tradition — great news. We have given Joyce a greetings message from us to take back to Chile.



India

At a recent Council, Mr P A Karuvilla, President of Cochin Branch, was appointed Toc H Commissioner for India. In sending him and his supporting team every good wish for the future, we are also conscious of the debt owed to the previous Commissioner Soundara Pandiyan for his many years in that post and we are glad that he remains a Trustee.

Overseas Links

The Isle of Wight Branches have not opted out of the Southern Region, but, as a result of the visit of Dion Roder, Chairman of Toc H Southern Africa, they are all involved in overseas links: Parkhurst Men with Orlando; Parkhurst Women with Vereeniging (Transvaal); Sandown/Shanklin with Mossel Bay (Cape Province); Ryde with Belgravia (East London); Newport Women with Kimberley Centenary. There are many such links elsewhere, but if any Branch is interested in starting a correspondence with an overseas unit, please get in touch with us.

International Week

This will be held at Alison House (9-11 September) by invitation of South Yorkshire District. To make it more worthwhile, members from overseas are needed to attend: at present only one from Germany and one from Wales have booked! Please come if you can and reserve your place by writing to Headquarters.

Poperinge

Jack Trefusis writes: 'Another link with Talbot House's early days has been broken with the death on 27 May of Mr Arthur Lahaye (a Toc H Vice-President) at the age of 75. He was the eldest son of Burgomaster Nestor Lahaye who received King George V when he visited Poperinge in 1919...



'Born in Poperinge, Arthur Lahaye's childhood experience of WWI stood him in good stead when he became an outstanding member of the Belgian Resistance in WWII... His wartime activities on behalf of his country and the allied cause would make a fascinating book and his arrest and imprisonment by the Germans permanently affected his health... His wife, Charlotte, predeceased him by a few years but he leaves a son and two daughters, all married with families.

'The Lahaye family... were in the forefront of re-establishing 'The Old House' after 1930 when Lord Wakefield generously donated it to the Talbot House Association. Arthur was its Secretary for several years and in 1944 brought into the Association his brother, Sylvain, who in 1949, took over as Secretary and Treasurer, later becoming Vice-President until his death in 1976...

'Arthur Lahaye was a great Anglophile and friend of Toc H... He was a Justice of the Peace for both Veurne and Nieuwpoort. Toc H is and always will be greatly indebted to him for his friendship, help and sound advice, without which 'The Old House' would not hold the place it has in our Movement today.'

A Small Miracle

by Scott Shaw

Have you ever been chatting to someone, when all of a sudden, the unexpected happens? Up till then, the conversation's been jogging along normally when suddenly your friends snatch the reins from your hand and take the bit between their teeth!

That happened to Betty Cornick, one of the Movement's Trustees recently. She writes: 'It all arose out of a casual conversation at our choir practice one night, when the members expressed interest in Poperinge, of which they had heard me speak from time to time, and said "How about taking us?"'

Betty, a member of the choir since 1940, has been visiting Poperinge for 11 years, so that was no problem. The usual warm welcome from Charles and Ivy Swan set the mood for the trip which was probably to have better results than anyone could have imagined.

Interesting and rewarding

The Toc H adage 'Come and see' proved true yet again. Says Betty: '... it was interesting and rewarding to see the impression made upon non-Toc H people in the choir (without any ballyhoo from me) by Talbot House and everything to do with it'.

While in Poperinge, they gave a concert which raised £350 for the Talbot House restoration appeal and they have been asked to come back again in the spring of next year!



Photo: Tony Buttle

Local arrangements - booking hall, producing posters, programmes and handling the local publicity, were in the hands of Madame Vermiersch Portier, who is also a member of the Swan Toc H Group, and Talbot House Association and Chairman of the Poperinge Cultural Association. Says Betty: 'She did a splendid job of public relations'.

A special moment

Someone else who earns a bouquet from Betty is Connie Pring, one of our former staff in the South Eastern Regional office. Betty says: 'She gives a tremendous amount of help in arranging these visits (we are off tomorrow with the third one since Easter alone) and while over there she drives us all over the place with a quiet, unflappable charm which has endeared her to everybody'.



Photo: Eric Cornick

The visit made a deep impression on some members of the choir. Warm friendships were established with Belgian people and at least two choir members have become Builders.

We can all talk a lot about Toc H and what it's achieved, but sometimes there's a special moment when someone says 'All right - show me' or we say 'Come and see'. The result could be a small miracle.



'It still lacks something - put another tea bag in!'

Drawing by Peter Brooks

Mud, Mud, Glorious

Should you venture into deepest Gloucestershire during the first weekend of any month from March to November, you may catch a glimpse of a rare species wallowing in the silt of the lake at Leckhampton Court in Cheltenham. These strange beings are in fact the Gloucestershire Projects Group, a hardy breed, who appear at regular intervals clad in wellies and waterproofs, shovels and buckets in hand, ready to tackle the enormous challenge of clearing 1,000 tons and more of black, wet odorous silt from this small lake: we aim to restore it to its former beauty.

Dating from the 14th century, Leckhampton Court has recently been renovated by the Sue Ryder Foundation and converted into an aftercare unit for cancer sufferers: at present, it houses 41 patients. The house had a dignified history up to the end of the last century, changing hands among a succession of distinguished families. The last of these, the John Hargreaves family, were close friends of the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. Indeed, at the time of the Prince's intimate friendship with Lily Langtry, Hargreaves built the north wing with a special suite for the Prince and his lady.

During WWI, the house became a VAD hospital, through the generosity of the Hargreaves' daughter, and in WWII it was used by British and American forces. In 1957 it became a preparatory school but had long been neglected when the Sue Ryder Foundation took it over in 1977. Since then they have restored it in its original Cotswold sandstone, and it

stands complete and magnificent, ready to start a new chapter of its history.

Not so magnificent is the small lake which stands in front of the old stable block (also renovated and converted to cater for patients' needs). The lake had also been neglected and allowed to fill with silt washed down from the hillside and with dead leaves from the trees that surround it. The result — a two feet deep layer of unwanted mud and rotting vegetation in the bottom of the lake. Added to this, the man made clay puddle base had sprung a leak, and so the water level was well down, exposing the unsightly silt deposits.

The Gloucestershire Projects Group of Toc H, like many other local groups, were ready to help the Sue Ryder Foundation with the huge task of restoring the grounds, including the lake. Initially, we ran two summer projects in 1980 and 1981 at which volunteers took on the task of cutting back the unwanted vegetation that had developed around the house. With this part of the work complete, the focus of attention was shifted to the lake itself.

The first job was to drain the remaining surface water. We achieved this by digging a deep drainage channel outside the lake and by partially demolishing the old sluice. Even with this done, work could not yet start in the lake itself. This was because the water flowing out of the lake carries large amounts of sediment which was liable to block the small bore drain pipe carrying the water away. To prevent this, a number of silt traps had to be constructed.

With this done, the task of removing the silt from the lake could begin... except that it was so soft and saturated due to the constant flowing in of water from the hillside, that it would not support the weight of volunteer diggers standing on it. Our next task, therefore, was to drain the silt by cutting drainage channels across it in order to drop the level of the incoming streams to the level of the clay base so that the remainder of the silt could drain into these channels. This was a frustrating job as the saturated and soft silt would tend to slide back into the channel as we were digging it out: it was a case of two steps forward and one step back each time! However, this is now almost complete and we are ready to get on with the real task of taking the silt out of the lake, before repairing the clay puddle base (does anyone know how to find a leak in a clay puddle based lake?) and reflooding it.

Of course, to clear over 1,000 tons of silt by shovels and buckets will involve a great deal of hard work, and so the more people involved with the project the better it will be and the sooner the task will be completed. To help us we have the services of the local group from the Bristol Trust for Conservation Volunteers who come along on a regular basis, and we also had the help of Cheltenham College last term as part of their community service programme. Cheltenham Grammar School's Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme section propose to hold a sponsored 'lake dig' in the autumn to raise funds for themselves and help our cause too. As well as these, we intend to hold one or two long weekend projects over the Easter or May



Is Mud!

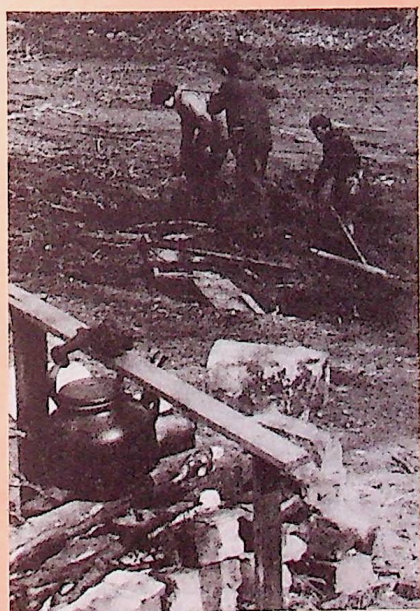
by Peter Sturgess

bank holidays next year, one of which we hope will be a gathering from Action Groups up and down the country. This will help people involved with local projects to meet their counterparts from other Regions, exchange ideas and spend a constructive weekend working on the lake. Anyone interested?

Meanwhile the work continues on the first weekend of each month with a number of local people supporting the Gloucestershire Projects Group in their labours. It is remarkable how many people return again and again to help despite the unrewarding nature of the work and the extremely muddy conditions: it is uncommon for a volunteer to appear only once at the lake and decide it is not for him – much to their credit and our relief! Perhaps they are hopeful of finding buried treasure but all we've uncovered so far are a few broken bottles and a couple of old shoes. However, we live in hope!

Should anyone be interested in joining a work party at the lake they will be more than welcome on the following dates: 7/8 August, 3/4 September, 1/2 October and 5/6 November this year. For more details please contact John Mitchell, Kyrle House, Edde Cross Street, Ross on Wye. (Tel: Ross-on-Wye 62336).

So, if you happen to be passing through Cheltenham on the first weekend of the month, please do drop in (literally!) as you will be most welcome. A day in Leckhampton Court lake will be, I'm sure, quite unlike anything you've experienced before!



We will Remember...

Lack of space has compelled us to hold over some obituary notices received. We hope to include these in future issues.
-Editor

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In February

Arthur C J Murphy (South East Hants District)

In March

Thomas Bailey (Buckland)

In April

Vyvan G Ellen (Southampton District)
George Farrar (Kimberworth)

In May

Ronald L Bland (Oswestry)
Edward G W Bolton (Wigmore & Rainham)
Frances M Gillson (Ipswich)
Ethel Gyton (Cromer)
Ivor G Reakes-Williams (Alvechurch)

In June

Mary Adams (North Hinksey)
Myra Bullmore (RHHI)
Dorothy Coshead (RHHI)
Walter L Jones (Southend-on-Sea)
Ruby Records (Brandon)

Will Cantle died in April. He was a fine Secretary to Lee (London) Branch during the 60s and most of the 70s. Will also devoted a great deal of time to the British Limbless ex Servicemen's Association as its local Chairman. Having himself lost an arm, he was a particular inspiration to many who knew him because he did so much to help other people. He will be sadly missed by his many friends in Toc H.

'In the Toc H Langdale Centre at Weirside there is now a pine quartz battery clock donated by Ulverston Branch in memory of Phyl Whitely. Phyl died in March after a very painful illness which she bore with indomitable courage. A loyal and devoted member of Morecambe Branch for many years, she introduced the Branch to much imaginative service... She had the great gift of inspiring others to serve their fellows and this service has been the hallmark of Morecambe... Districts from various parts of the Region who brought children to camp in Morecambe were always made to feel at home, and fed and watered with imagination (and volume!) by Phyl and the Branch members. Weirside had a very special place in her heart. She did the cooking for children from Merseyside and other parts of the Region who came there and was invaluable in her help and support...

'Two years ago Phyl went to live in Ulverston with her son and his family - in the short time she was able to be with the Branch she gave freely of herself and her enthusiasm.

'As a friend of long standing I write of Phyl with love and affection...

'Morecambe, Ulverston and the other Lakeland Branches give thanks for her life and work.'

PW

'With infinite regret we advise the death of Looe Branch and Wivelshire District Padre (Revd Edward Donald Bonnar) on 11 February at the age of 75. He was widely respected and loved and Looe Branch share a sense of personal loss on the passing of a colleague, a friend and a wise councillor. We are also sad to learn of the recent death in Australia of our former member Jack Hardaker.'

Sid Eves, the last surviving founder member of Uckfield Branch, died on 23 March aged 83 years.

'I first met Sid when I joined the Branch 25 years ago. He was always friendly and kind - not only to me but to all our members and we all looked up to him. Sid - a mild and lovable character - was staunch and dependable.

'Two years ago he was driven by age and ill health to resign his membership. Realising how much he had given to Toc H we made him Honorary Life President of Uckfield Branch (I believe the first time ever that such an honour had been awarded to a Toc H member)... We all feel it a great honour to have had him as a friend, and we thank God for his life.'

JG

Milford-on-Sea Joint Branch report the death of three of their members.

'Mary Young, a former Branch President, died in October last. The Branch does not usually have a President, but the position was created for her because of her much valued contribution. As national Overseas Secretary of the Mothers' Union she undertook an exhausting country wide tour of Australia... Perhaps she will be best remembered in Milford as an expert embroideress. She was a member of the Guild of Embroiderers and worked hassocks for St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey as well as for All Saints' Milford. Even shortly before her death she continued this work, and was an inspiration to the residents of the nursing home, teaching them embroidery and tapestry. She was County vice-President of the Hampshire Girl Guides and designed and made up the Hurst Castle Division Standard. She also created the embroidered picture of a Toc H lamp which is displayed every Friday at the Toc H luncheon in the Church Hall at Milford. We will miss an

outstandingly kind person and a successor will indeed be difficult to find.

Edyth Checkley, Programme Secretary died in January. Edyth came to Milford in 1973 from Harrow, where she had worked for Kodak for many years. A very faithful member of Toc H and a wonderful organiser, she was always cheerful in spite of ill health.

Revd Philip Grubb, our Padre, died after a short illness in January. At one period 'Custos' of a gentlemen's hospital similar to the one seen recently on TV in 'The Barchester Chronicles', Philip was active in the Samaritans, and retired to Milford in 1974. In addition to being our Padre and helping tirelessly even in retirement with the various work of the Church in the parish, he was Chaplain of a local preparatory school where he taught Latin and Scripture. A lifelong follower of St Francis, whose compassion and good humour he shared in full measure, he gave us a memorable account of a visit to Assisi last year. A Service of Thanksgiving was held at Milford Parish Church on 29 January and many of those who packed the church on that occasion would agree with the comment in the press that here was truly a 'holy and humble man of heart'.

AME

'We in Blackpool Women's Branch are mourning the loss of our Secretary Mrs Elsie Threlfall who died suddenly on Good Friday.

'Elsie joined Toc H in Manchester 54 years ago. In 1932 she came to Blackpool and for 51 years has been a devoted member of this Branch and a dedicated supporter of the Movement. She has conscientiously fulfilled many posts in Branch and District and has also served as Central Councillor...

'Those attending the funeral service were touched by the warmth of the remarks made by our Branch Padre Revd Albert Wilde who referred to Elsie as "a reliable, cheery, helpful soul. Her one comment for today would have been 'You don't need to do all that for me' - this is the reply of a devoted Christian after a lifetime of service to our Lord. How can we assess the value of years of service to - amongst others - the Civil Service Alliance, The League of Hospital Friends, WRVS, Meals on Wheels - as well as to innumerable tasks for Toc H?'

'Without question we are all the richer for having known Elsie.'

EAT

We give thanks for their lives

IDEAS CORNER

Is there a better way to sell books for funds? Most of us (me included) would include them in a jumble sale. Some enterprising Branches have a regular stall, with the added advantage of making contacts with helpers or potential members.

But why not sell books in the most obvious place — a shop? Toc H Crawley got the co-operation of a newsagent and raised £100 by selling 'books as good as new'.

The advantages are obvious when you think about it. With a jumble sale, there's a rush to get rid of your stuff so items are usually very under priced. In a shop you can select the best, price them more realistically and display them attractively.

Customers will spend more time browsing (not so in the frenetic atmosphere of a jumble sale or beside an open air stall if the weather is bad).

Finally, you don't need to provide any man or woman power — the shopkeeper can collect the money for you, or customers can put it in a collecting tin.

So who's going to be next to give it a try?

Photo: Army Public Information



Toc H, who provide a valuable service to all members of Verden Garrison, have moved after 26 years into new, enlarged premises. Toc H was first accommodated in Gibraltar Kaserne in the town in 1957. The new complex, which has a shop, cafe and quiet room, was formally opened by Mrs Kenny, wife of the Commander 1st Armoured Division, at a ceremony attended by many members of the Garrison. Gilbert Francis, Toc H Commissioner welcomed Mrs Kenny and paid tribute to the hard work during the move of all the staff, especially Fred Mason, Toc H Warden.

Friends Anonymous Service

(Registered Charity No CP265514R)

**RESIDENT FULL-TIME VOLUNTEERS
TO WORK IN A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN
HACKNEY'S EAST END OF LONDON**

Wanted for period of not less than one year to live and work in Hackney's East End of London in a Christian Community, believing that God speaks through men of all faiths. Applicants must be tolerant and open-minded and ready to learn the difficulties and hard facts about life together with others in an ecumenical/interfaith centre, and must be prepared to work extremely hard for very long hours and with very little time to themselves. Work, which will entail dealing with elderly, disabled, victims of crime, ethnic minorities, youth and children, is often mundane, in a very depressed and deprived urban area. Full board and lodging and pocket-money provided (Nat C S V Scale).

The work and life in the Community demands total commitment and applicants who are uncertain about themselves, their relationships and their faith will find this work impossible and life in Community unbearable, but applicants who are able to make a commitment will find the work very worthwhile, satisfying and a training for life.

For application forms and information write to:

Revd Gualter R de Mello, Executive Director, Friends Anonymous Service, Prideaux House, 10 Church Crescent, London E9 7DL.



Photo: East Essex Gazette

Video games are a great help in the rehabilitation of stroke patients. So, when Clacton's Toc H discovered that the Passmore Edwards Rehabilitation Centre's set had 'disappeared', they agreed to replace it.

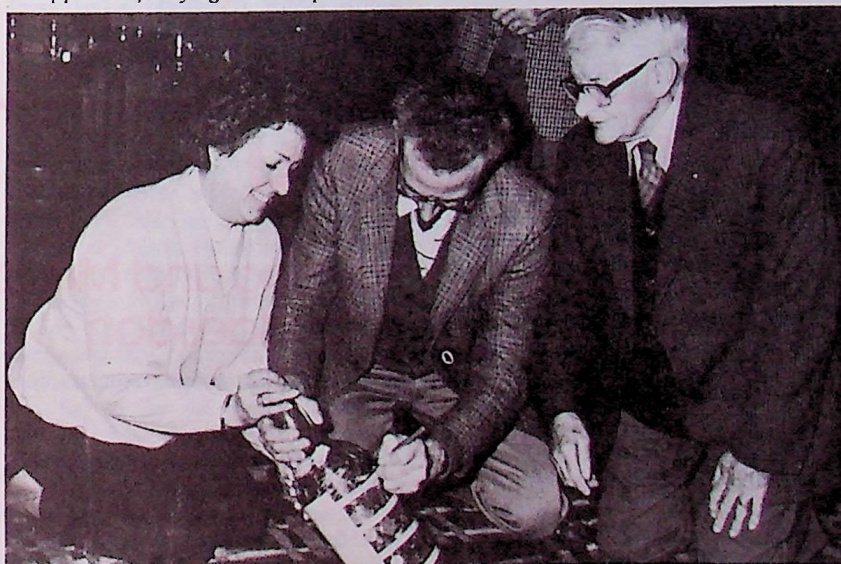


Photo: Kent & Sussex Courier

Counting the booty in the bottle! Since 1980, regulars of the High Brooms Hotel have contributed £450 of the £1,400 raised by High Brooms (Kent) Toc H Branches for the benefit of local elderly people.

Open Forum

Are we finished?

The short answer to Fred Wilkins (May issue) is the one I recently received – namely *if you think leadership is lacking why not seek election to the Central Council?* For a variety of reasons many of us cannot follow this approach but this does not mean we have lost our right to speak up.

It is of course only too easy to criticise and therefore in responding to Fred's challenge to express views I will confine myself to two prime but rather related matters.

First, whilst individuals and Branches beaver away doing their thing the Movement as a whole lacks focal points of wider national projects which can catch the eye of the would-be member. Builder, charitable trust and even the Government. Whether we like it or not, these are the sources of money without which we are doomed to early extinction.

Secondly, the leadership (whatever that means) allows things to slip between their fingers by vacillating. For example, after years of 'blow hot' and 'blow cold' over Marks, there emerged the concept of small community houses, tenanted by highly committed individuals eager to work in and for the community. At the same time such houses would bring up to date the role of the Marks and provide a focus for action and money raising by Branches in the same Region. The staff stomped around London (at least) selling the concept and thus to the wrecked aspiration caused by the closure of Croydon Centre, Prideaux House etc, would come phoenix-like the new houses! Brothers House was to be such a Centre but within three months of oral commitment everything went dead.

Attempts to revive the project at nil extra cost to Toc H and pleas from the Région were brushed aside with scarce a comment. Thus all that remains is a half baked scheme at Putney which seems to contribute little to local or national needs. What happened to all the money from the sale of the Centres and Marks is anyone's guess* but there is little or nothing to show for it.

Lack of focal points and vacillation – these are my personal complaints.

Turning from the negative to the positive, I can see two apparently successful schemes in the Crawley area. Why are they successful? I regretfully draw the conclusion that they have what the Movement lacks:

- a. They are focal points of major importance and not fanciful pipe dreams.
- b. They have dedicated, far sighted and consistent leadership.

Finally they are free of the vacillation of the Central Council. What about letting them and others like them have use of the proceeds from the Marks?

John Trimmer
Croydon

* Note: What has happened to the proceeds of the sale of Marks and Centres is not 'anybody's guess' but has been clearly decided by the CEC and equally clearly set out many times. The money is available to help set up community houses and training centres whenever and where they are needed. The firm basis of the CEC's decision was that people come first – not buildings. Wherever a nucleus of committed people appear who wish to experiment with the community living that was the original *raison d'être* of

Marks, they will not be prevented by lack of funds. Marks and Centres have been closed only when the committed group was not there, or there was no local support – or both. The CEC's decision was simply that there is magic in people, but not in buildings and that it is not only pointless but harmful to pour money and effort into buildings that no longer serve a Toc H purpose. Editor

Considering the statement by Ken Prideaux-Brune in your June issue, one wonders if the Director has not gone slightly 'bananas'. To say that it doesn't matter whether Toc H survives or not looks almost naive! but he goes on to explain that what must survive is the spirit manifested in Toc H – it is the organisation that doesn't matter.

But surely the organisation is the vehicle for that spirit – a quite unique spirit? Toc H is the only Christian organisation I know which '*... seeks to create friendships and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs*' and is willing to do something about it. Until that particular commitment is taken up in a more vigorous and effective way by another organisation Toc H stays!

What am I saying? Oh, I get your point now, Ken. Sorry!

Jim Camduff
Skelmorlie, Ayrshire

Well done, but could do better!

This letter was prompted by reading your first class article on the Sheffield bus (June issue). What a marvellous project! Imaginative, ambitious, enterprising, all Yorkshire Toc H – absorbing – and how marvellously showing the enthusiasm,

For your diary

Quiet Weekend

There are still some places available on the Quiet Weekend at Alison House to be conducted by Bishop Alan Rogers from 23 to 25 September.

The inclusive cost of the whole weekend will be £20.50.

For further details and applications write to Christine McCaskie, Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Painting and Music at Cuddesdon

There are still a few vacancies for October 22-29.

Complete beginners and 'old hands' equally welcome.

For further details and applications write to Christine McCaskie, Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Week of Prayer for World Peace

To mark the end of the Week of Prayer for World Peace, there will be a day of prayer at Cuddesdon House, starting at 12 noon on 29 October and ending at 4 pm on 30 October.

All are welcome.

The inclusive cost for the full period will be £7.

Further details from Revd Colin Rudd, Cuddesdon House, Wheatley Road, Cuddesdon, Oxford OX9 9HB. (Tel: Wheatley 2004).

Opinions expressed in these columns (including any editorial comment) are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement. We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters carrying the correspondent's full name and address will be considered for publication.

sticking power and joy of so many members in their involvement. I feel like writing to them all to compliment them . . . It's not only a marvellous story, but marvellously told; enough to inspire the whole Movement with enthusiasm and renewed confidence.

Incidentally, LTV Nigel Pratt must be a great chap too, but I'm rather vague as to the status, role, etc of LTVs. I wonder if others are, and if perhaps a short article on LTVs would be a good thing.

(We'll see what we can do. — Editor)

And that raises another suggestion re *Point Three*. I think it would be very helpful if the Regional initials were added wherever a Branch or District is mentioned whose location cannot be obviously known by its name. For example, on the 'We will remember' page, I am often in doubt in which part of the country a Branch is located. It seems to me that the two or three additional letters would rarely cause any loss of space.

(What do you think? — Editor)

I must add that Maggie Kay's article also was so uplifting (edifying — a sadly lost Victoria term) with some most significant sentences expressing the catalyst nature of Toc H. Also Megan John's important article . . .

Rudolf Loewy
Harrow

Stamps again!

Congratulations to Reg Collins and Bournemouth and Christchurch Joint Branch in their efforts to turn stamps and other items into cash for Toc H (May issue). Their results show that they obviously think it well worth their while to sort out masses of material from local firms and pick out the sellable material.

May I thank the many Branches and individuals who continue to send stamps to me — especially the Branch with a friend at a large provincial theatre booking office! Special thanks also to the 83 year old London lady whose scrapbook of stuckdown stamps showed that pre-war gum was just as sticky as present day chemical glues. (But we found a buyer for it!)

If you are in one of the many Branches that send us sorted stamps, please don't waste postage on GB decimal stamps of first class rate or below. (We give ours to a local church charity). What we need, apart from foreign stamps are the older ones, high value decimals, Regional and Channel Islands, IOM and any commemoratives.

Please help us to carry on the good work, and if you can save postage by handing them in to Reg Collins when you go on holiday to Bournemouth, please do so.

It's all in a good cause!

George ('The Stamp') Dixon
Peterborough

Are we taking ourselves too seriously?

We thought we would write to the terribly serious 'Maggie Kay Magazine' (formerly known as *Point Three*) to say how thrilled we were at winning the 1982 Christmas Quiz and having our names printed in this famous magazine. Is it true that the first prize is a week at Colsterdale and the second prize is two weeks at Colsterdale? The competition was certainly very hard: even Mrs Olave Hall (is this a pseudonym of Fred Housego?) only managed to score 107 out of 112, but nevertheless, well done Olave!

Is it true that the Plus Bus is to be the new HQ for Toc H? Better than an elephant anyway! Incidentally, who is Scott Shaw and is he going to make a meal of Frank Rice?

Anyway we've got to go and sign on 'cause we're 'learning for leisure'. (It's frail canoeing next week!)

Liz and Rob Dixon
Scarborough

It's holiday time!

Toc H is a family and families try to go away for a holiday. I would strongly recommend Branches or Districts to try the experiment.

The Isle of Wight has just completed its fifth holiday together.

Two of these were to the Old House and were led by Derrick Parsons. The other three were to Alison House (twice) and this year to Cuddesdon House . . . Both Alison House and Cuddesdon are set in beautiful surroundings . . . Cuddesdon House, formerly the Bishop of Oxford's home, has, in addition to a lovely modern house, fine gardens with views of the picturesque village church and the lovely old Ripon Theological College. For the energetic there are country walks round about including one to the neighbouring village of Wheatley with its quaint 'one person' jail. There are many places of interest to visit and coach trips to the White Horse Hill, Marlow, Henley on Thames. Blenheim Palace, and the Cotswolds were enjoyed. Shorter trips were made to Oxford for

shopping etc. There was an Epilogue each evening led by different members and on Thursday evening Light was taken, using the Lamp formerly at Dor Knap. This followed a light-hearted social evening with games and dancing. Services attended were the Family Communion at Cuddesdon Church on Sunday and the mid-week Communion Service at Cuddesdon House taken by Colin Rudd.

The highlight was a trip to Toc H Headquarters at Wendover where we met members of the staff and had an interesting conducted tour of the offices, during which Branch secretaries took the opportunity of replenishing stocks of stationery etc, thus saving postage.

Altogether a very enjoyable 'family' holiday which I can strongly recommend. Why not try it?

Don Webster
Sandown, I of W

We have just returned from a holiday in the beautiful scenic town of Conwy in North Wales. We stayed in the Llys Gwilym Guest House, run by Doreen and Bill Baxter, which is regularly advertised in *Point Three* and we would like to recommend it wholeheartedly to your readers. We had a very friendly welcome and every comfort, with beautiful food served with a smile.

We hope other members may choose it for a memorable holiday.

Margaret and Ted Pape
Winchester

What can we do?

When I wrote the notes you published in your April issue, under this heading, I evidently misled at least some of your readers.

In your June issue, Maggie Kay from Hull, responds that the answer to the heading of my note, 'What Can We Do?' is that we should ' . . . work within our capabilities, but do it together.' She had evidently missed one of the main points of my lament, namely that like many others of my generation, I am living many miles from any existing Toc H unit, in a village in which, in spite of careful enquiry, I can trace no member, or ex-member.

Philip Douch, too, has mis-read me (June issue). I am very far from suggesting that because I, and my contemporaries, are ancient, Toc H should change. On the contrary, it is our most earnest prayer that the spirit of adventure that caught our youthful imaginations, and bound them to Toc H

Open Forum_{continued}

for the rest of our lives, should continue to 'infect' our sons, and our grandsons, (and their sisters!). But I do take his point, that such fund raising activities as my friends and I indulge in, ought at least to include such Toc H projects as come to our knowledge, whether through *Point Three* or the South East Region's *'Keeping in Touch'*. He may rest assured that 'outreach' has not escaped our notice, and that, thanks to postal contacts, I do know a little of what is being planned locally (ie in the south-east).

This also partially answers Peter Ranken (June issue). We have, for example, discovered that examination invigilators are required by a local school, and we are providing the required 'bods', throughout the May/June period.

Nevertheless, I still feel a little shy about wearing the badge, tie and blazer that proclaim me a member of Toc H, when in fact my only 'link' with that body is the payment of an annual (covenanted) subscription. In my more active days, mere payers of money, who seldom, if ever, attended Grope, Group

or Branch meetings were called 'Builders', and as far as I know, were never invited to wear any insignia. But then I also recall that there were sundry 'lone members' — men who, whether for domestic or business reasons, had to move away from their parent unit to some remote region where there was no 'Unit' for them to be transferred etc. At another stage I believe these 'unfortunates' were called 'District Members', and where practicable, were invited to District Guest Nights.

Finally, may I warmly thank, not only you for publishing my diatribe, but also Maggie Kay, Philip Douch and Peter Ranken for taking the trouble to respond so clearly and forcefully.

Philip H Carter
Cranleigh, Surrey

Clayton Volunteer 1982_{by Peter Kay}

I was one of last year's 18 Clayton Volunteers.

Each summer a group of Clayton volunteers travel to the United States where they work alongside other volunteers and staff on East coast projects for a two month period, followed by a one month holiday.

With one other volunteer, I was assigned to Fountain House — a non-residential psychiatric rehabilitation centre, near Times Square in Manhattan, New York.

The atmosphere is friendly and informal, more like a social club than a hospital. The patients (or members as they are always called) have all been in psychiatric hospitals for periods ranging from three weeks to 35 years, and most are chronic schizophrenics. Many have been teachers, lawyers, musicians; others have had psychiatric problems since childhood; all have something to offer society and are in need of personal rehabilitation. Fountain House teaches members to cope with the responsibility of handling money, running an apartment and eventually holding down a job.

The rehabilitation is very practical in that the members do almost all the work necessary to the running of Fountain House. The five storey building is divided into six units — thrift shop, snack bar, clerical office, kitchen and dining room, administration and education, and research. From four to six staff workers guide each unit and work with their share of the approximately 300 members who participate each day in the pre-vocational day programme. By working alongside members, often carrying out mundane jobs, such as cleaning, they are able to form relationships and through this to see members make use of some of the

following services:

- a transitional employment programme;
- a reach out programme for dropouts and rehospitallised members;
- an apartment programme for members who can't find adequate housing of their own;
- High Point — a farm project in New Jersey where members can learn to garden and care for farm animals;
- an evening and weekend social recreational programme.

I was first assigned to a thrift or charity shop supplied by donations from the public, retailers and manufacturers: my job was, with a group of members, to sort through the donations, itemising, pricing and displaying. Later I was reassigned to a clerical office working on attendance and cleaning work. In both units I found the work meant helping members to organise themselves to do the daily work necessary to the running of the unit, ie helping with their living problems, and their apartments as well as helping them make future plans and work at realistic aims.

Training in the form of a weekly support/education session was given by one of the senior members of staff. Sometimes this took the form of a talk by a psychiatrist and sometimes a discussion between ourselves. This was often a good opportunity to reflect on the week past and to get a broader picture of Fountain House as a whole. Since the other Clayton volunteer, Tina Burrows, and I chose to get very involved and to take a lot of responsibility, we found we were both given a lot of responsibility and sometimes left as the only social workers

with a group of members . . . We both felt that the more involved we became the more we learned, not only about the members, but also about ourselves.

At no time did I feel like an outsider: from the beginning both staff and members treated me as one of their family and shared a piece of my life which I shall never forget.

At the end of the eight week work period came the start of a 5,000 mile car journey. The journey was undertaken with three other Clayton volunteers who shared the expense of the car as well as the experience of this trip of a lifetime. We drove to Toronto via Boston and Niagara Falls, turned South to Florida via Philadelphia and visited Cape Kennedy and Disney World before returning to New York via Washington DC. Everywhere the hospitality shown to us by the Americans was unbelievable. The people we met were not only helpful, but also opened their homes and often their hearts to us.

The farewell given to us in New York was exceeded only by the reception we had received on arrival. It was with sadness that we said our farewells to members of the Winant Volunteers who had been such perfect hosts and who had become dear friends.

It was both with happiness to see each other again and sadness to know that it was finally over, that most of us met in London for a debrief. Only six months earlier a group of strangers had first come together for the initial briefing.

Who can say what the true value is in sending volunteers to the United States? I can only say that it gave me the unique opportunity to experience the feeling of

BE STILL then....

Should you require Bible Reading Fellowship Notes and find difficulty in obtaining them at your local church, we can send them from here for £2 per annum. The Chaplain will send you the complete list of daily intercessions on request.

BORDON LETTER

by Canon H C M Potts

When I was in business as a father taking a family of lively youngsters on holiday, I used to attempt to secure law and order in the back seat of the family car by collecting the names of the pubs we passed. Two stick in my mind — *'The Goat and Compasses'* and *'The Crossed Hands'*. The odd name of the first turns out to be a corruption of the phrase *'God encompasseth us'*. The other depends for its relevance on the picture which I will later describe.

But the first name relates to the fact of the Divine Initiative. Long before Jesus walked on earth men had known that somehow, however dreadful their experiences, God was still there and they sought to encourage one another with this truth. *'The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms'* says Jeremiah, for our comfort just as much as for those of his own day, and the writer of the 23rd Psalm reminds us that in the valley of the shadow of death we are to fear no evil for He is with us. Indeed it is in moments of reverse, when things are so starkly going against us that we need to be reminded that there is indeed another dimension of life in which everything is working according to plan. In fact God's way of coping with the seemingly endless disorders, diseases, disappointments of this world, in which

free will and free play have been given to the children of men, is to let it happen, whatever it may be, and then to create good out of the mess at His own expense. There is in fact a specific way of accepting the distasteful, the disastrous, the disappointing situation which is very far removed from mere capitulation, and it is by pegging our flapping attention to the truth that the divine will does indeed encompass us and that out of the callousness of the slammed door of the Bethlehem inn and out of the stark injustice and cruelty of Calvary (let alone the letting down by friends) God can produce endless and totally satisfying good. He has the laugh on the devil, but we have to play it Jesus' way. Yet once we seriously do take up the cross we find it has taken us up instead.

'The Crossed Hands' showed a highwayman with a brace of pistols crossed over his chest. *'Your money or your life'* was his demand. By contrast the demand of Jesus is stronger. *'Your money and your life'* he asks. I think most of our money worries in Toc H would vanish like morning mist if we could but learn to hand over our lives to Christ, beginning with some quite small thing and as we gain confidence tackling something bigger. Our attitude to money would change very rapidly too. The very 'givingness' of His nature would dissolve our cautiousness. We should in actual fact begin to experience more and more of what it means to be children of a Father who *'gives us all things richly to enjoy'* and enables us to reproduce the family likeness.

God bless you all. Be happy!

Florence Cole puts her wish in the box during the Toc H Wishing Week in Hartley Wintney.

comradeship as well as to learn more about myself. However, with the present economic climate someone is surely going to have to put a financial value on this type of experience and its gain to society and the Toc H Movement.

While 18 volunteers travelled to the States, two having had previous Toc H experience, only one more of the returning group thought they would be interested in other Toc H projects etc apart from helping with the next group of Claytons. I think it is this that is responsible for the insular attitude of some of the ex-Claytons which I met at the debriefing. They seemed to resent the idea of Toc H having more say in the choice of applicants. They saw Claytons as a separate movement rather than a part of the larger Toc H family, (except when the Toc H name was found useful for fund raising).

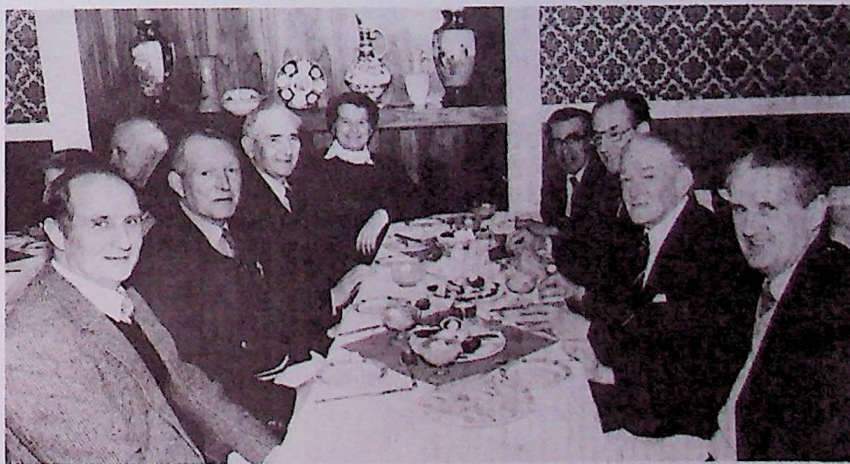
This, in my opinion, is because not enough of the volunteers have had previous experience of Toc H and a solution may be found if the Movement takes a closer control of the choice of the Claytons. The implication of this is that Toc H will have to help not only in finding more applicants from its existing ranks but also with their expenses. This has surely been demonstrated by the fact that both volunteers this year who had previous Toc H experience were also financially helped by Toc H.*

I would like to thank the NE Regional Executive, the Llanarmon-yn-Ial Branch, the Pocklington Ladies Branch and the Cottingham Ladies Branch of Toc H who financially supported me last summer.

It could be that from my experience and the foresight of these Branches, we all may learn a lesson.

* See the Winant/Clayton section on our International page elsewhere in this issue.

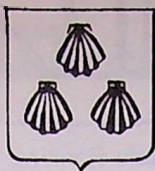
Editor



Earlier this year, Looe (Cornwall) Men's Branch mounted their annual senior citizen's tea and entertainment at the town's Portbyhan Hotel.

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